carolina country
the monthly magazine of north carolina's electric cooperatives

Season's Greetings

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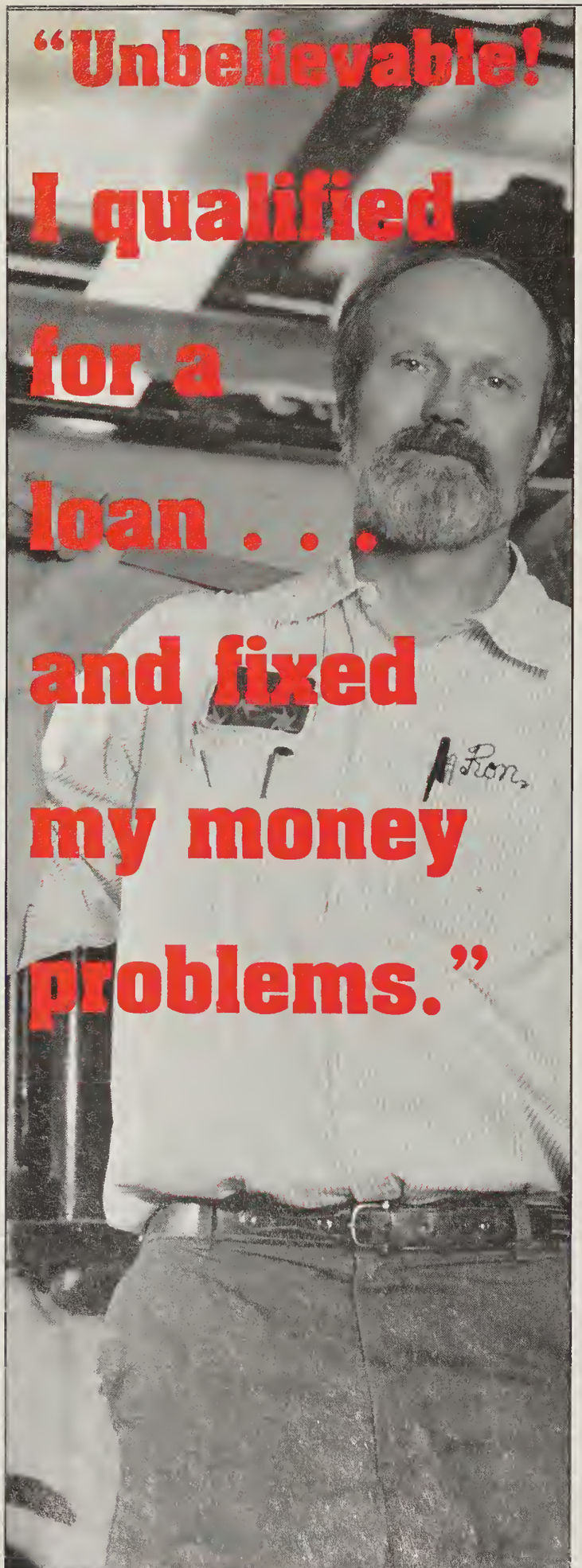
Some back-up heaters could be unsafe — *page 14*



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(ISSN 0008-6746)
Read monthly in more
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Volume 30, No. 12, December1998

Official Publication of
North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives
(800) 662-8835 or (919) 875-3062

North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to 750,000 homes, farms and businesses in North Carolina. The 27 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

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Carolina Country ® is published by the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, N.C., and additional mailing offices. Editorial offices: 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, N.C. 27616. Phone: (800) 662-8835, ext. 3062. Carolina Country is a registered trademark of the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, Inc.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, N.C. 27611.

Individual subscriptions, $8 per year.

To change address, send magazine mailing label to your electric cooperative.

Printed on recycled paper

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Volume 30, No. 12, December 1998

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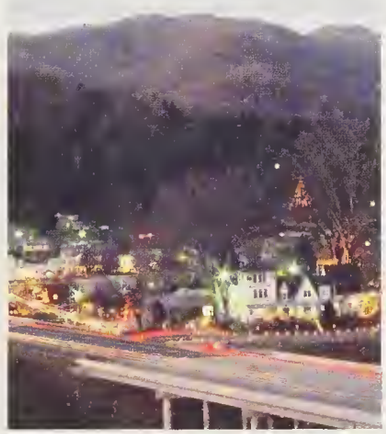


On the Cover

The village of Dillsboro in Jackson County during the Lights and Luminaire. The 14th annual festival opens Dec. 4 and spans the first two Fridays and Saturdays of December. All four blocks of Dillsboro glow with traditional luminaries and are decorated with greenery and lights. The 50-plus shops, galleries, restaurants and inns take on a festive look, and there's holiday music, the "Santa Express" excursion train, and a tree burning 14,000 watts of power. For information, call (800) 962-1911. Photo by Sue Ann Kuhn-Smith.

More power to you

Piedmont EMC is a comfort to me

So many times I have thought about how things happen for a reason. Back in the late 1970s, Piedmont EMC wanted to increase the right-of-way by 29 feet on our road so tree limbs would not touch the power lines. At that time the road was not paved and it was mostly all on Medford Oakley's land. He and I both had to sign the right-of-way agreement, and we knew it was in the best interest of not only our family but other families who lived on the road with us.

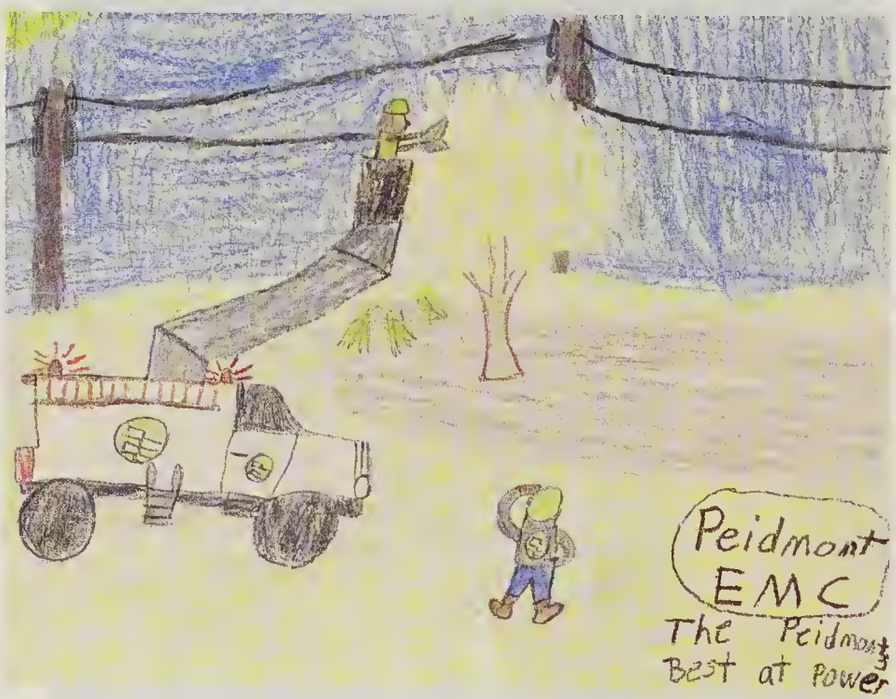
In later years, my husband's health gradually got worse. He had respiratory problems. Another neighbor also had respiratory problems and was on oxygen. Whenever a storm or bad weather occurred and we had to call for assistance, Piedmont EMC always came to our rescue. During Hurricane Fran, Piedmont had their hands full but still came to our rescue and were very caring because they knew of his needs.

My husband and I were always willing to do whatever we could to help, but we knew that Piedmont cared about us and knew his health problems and gave us priority because of that. He would always say, "I knew they would come if they knew I needed them."

It is a great comfort to him and me that people who work for Piedmont EMC are so caring and thoughtful and take the time to make sure we are all right.

Wilma D. Oakley
Rougemont

As Mrs. Oakley says in her letter, there are good reasons for keeping trees away from power lines. The main reason is to protect the lines during storms, so that current keeps running.



Bryan Phelps, age 11, drew this picture to illustrate the importance of maintaining rights-of-way and keeping trees away from power lines. Bryan, with his mom, is a regular reader of Carolina Country. He lives in Hurdle Mills with his mother and dad (who is Jerald Phelps, right-of-way supervisor for Piedmont EMC).

People really like electric co-ops

A survey of 1,017 electricity consumers nationwide shows that they strongly prefer co-ops to other utilities in key measures of customer satisfaction. The survey was conducted in July by The Preston Group, a marketing and management services organization based in Lexington, Ky.

The survey used a 1-to-7 scale of satisfaction for consumers to describe their level of satisfaction with their electric utility. Electric co-ops rated highest in satisfaction (sevens only), with 50 percent, compared to 47.1 for municipal systems and just 39.4 percent for investor-owned utilities (IOUs). When sixes are added to the mix, co-ops score even higher, with a 70.5 percent rating, compared to 69 percent for municipally owned utilities ("munis") and 65 percent for IOUs.

"Co-ops have long enjoyed a familial relationship with their consumers," said Phil Osborne, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of The Preston Group, which commissioned the survey on behalf of its Utilimark division. "It would appear that the national snapshot of customer attitudes would reinforce the cooperatives' historic position."

Customers surveyed said they were more satisfied with service from electric utilities (43.7 percent) than they were with their local phone company (35.1 percent) or their cable or satellite service (21.8 percent). This has important implications, Osborne said. The survey further noted that 56.2 percent of customers served by electric co-ops want their co-op to expand services to other realms, such as telecommunications and Internet access. Overall, 43.7 percent of all customers supported their electric utility's expansion into such services. — *Mike Sorohan, Electric Co-op Today*

Electricity Safety

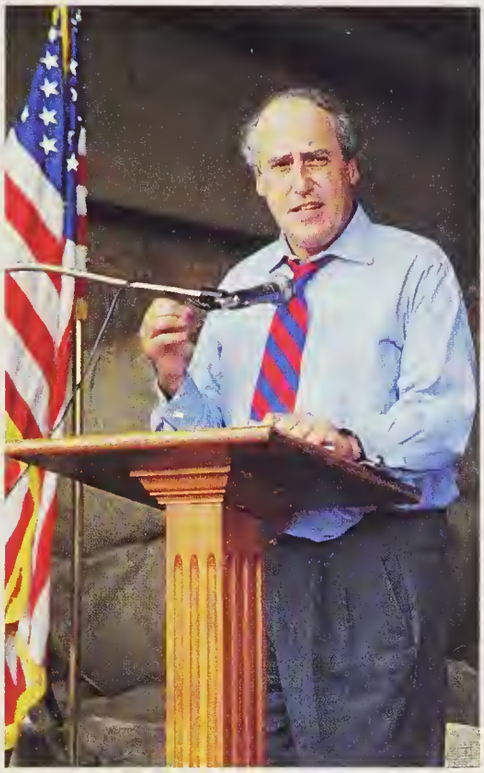
Frequently asked safety questions about electricity

Question: How can utility line personnel work on energized lines and not be injured?

Answer: First of all, these workers are highly qualified and have been trained extensively for line work. Second, they have a variety of protective equipment that enables them to handle up to 34,500 volts. This protective equipment includes insulated rubber gloves, sleeves, specially-designed insulated tools and specially-insulated vehicles. These workers also follow stringent safety guidelines.

Ag. Secretary Glickman looks at N.C. family farms, tobacco, barbecue

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman discussed family farms and tobacco production during a visit to eastern North Carolina in September. Glickman was invited to by Congresswoman Eva Clayton (D-Littleton) and Congressman Bob Etheridge (D-Lillington) to hear directly from farmers who face challenges due to changes in price supports, weather and tobacco legislation.



Dan Glickman in Wilson County.

The Secretary visited the farm of Pender Sharp in Sims, Wilson County, N.C., for a barbecue lunch sponsored by the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, along with the N.C. Farm Bureau and First Citizens Bank.

Sharp Farms is a tobacco, row crop and livestock operation. Host Pender Sharp thanked Glickman for coming "to witness first-hand tobacco production and to get a feel for the crisis we are experiencing in the tobacco industry and in farming as a whole." Sharp walked Glickman to the tobacco barns, where workers were barning just-harvested leaf.

"I've always supported the tobacco program, even during my 18 years in Congress," Glickman said. "I recognize that if you look at the country and you see this tremendous reduction in the number of family farmers in corn, wheat, cotton and rice country, the one place you don't see this reduction is in tobacco country. Clearly, the program has stabilized that income source so [tobacco farmers] don't have massive gyrations of income from year to year, as compared to what you see in the Midwest. We need to preserve the program."

Glickman also stated that the Farm Bill of 1996 (the Freedom to Farm Act) has not worked. It has, in effect, taken away many of the safety nets agriculture had in the past to help farmers in times of high supply, low demand and low prices. "We need to fix the safety net. The government can't come in and micro-manage every aspect of American agriculture." He added that current commodity prices are near World War II levels. "And I guarantee the cost of production hasn't gone down in the same way. I feel very strongly that as agriculture goes, so goes the rest of the country."

Gov. James B. Hunt noted that while the state's agriculture has diversified, tobacco farms still rely heavily on the leaf to support other crops.

Etheridge stated that if not for the tobacco and peanut programs, the number of farmers in eastern North Carolina would decrease "because those are the two commodities that underpin and support the other commodities grown, such as poultry, corn, wheat, potatoes and soybeans," he said. "Too many people know in this country that when we have just 2.5 to 3 percent of the people supporting the rest of us in food and fiber, we've got to continue to fight and sell the agricultural message all across the country."

Clayton added that North Carolina's representatives in Washington, as well as the administration, are fighting for all farmers. "We all care about every farmer, whether tobacco, cotton, potato or peanut, all farmers."

— Renee Gannon

Statewide

NCEMC contributes to statewide environmental conservation

North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, the electric generation and transmission cooperative based in Raleigh, recently endorsed a statewide environmental conservation program. With its contribution to the Conservation Trust of North Carolina, NCEMC became a Community Conservation Partner to help communities and landowners preserve and enhance the state's natural, cultural and rural environments.

NCEMC joins CTNC in the belief that land trusts operating within a special locale or home region are better able to respond to the needs and interests of their communities, just as NCEMC supports the local operations of electric cooperatives across North Carolina.

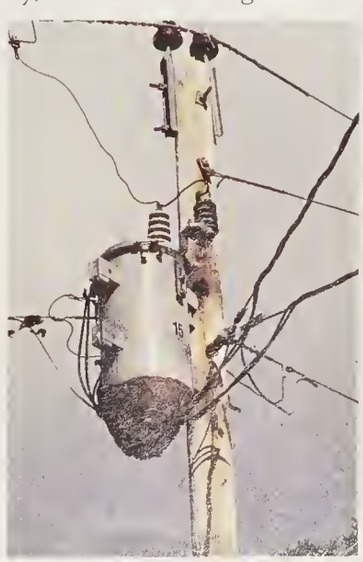
"This environmental stewardship initiative provides an opportunity for NCEMC's board to further its adopted policy of environmental commitment," says June M. Small, director of environmental affairs for NCEMC.

Since 1992, the Conservation Trust has assisted North Carolina's local and regional land trusts in a variety of ways, including start-up organizing, preparing inventories, arranging preservation projects, raising funds.

For more information about the Conservation Trust for North Carolina, contact the office at P.O. Box 33333, Raleigh, NC 27636 or by phone at (919) 828-4199.

An all-electric hornet home

My husband and I own a cabin on Sheepback Mountain (Jackson County). As we were taking a walk one day, my husband saw this transformer under which hornets had built a nest. It looks as though they had built an all-electric home.



Sheri Hartzell
Savannah, Ga.
Haywood EMC

Any transformation of a transformer, such as a bird or bee nest, should be reported to your electric co-op for safety reasons.

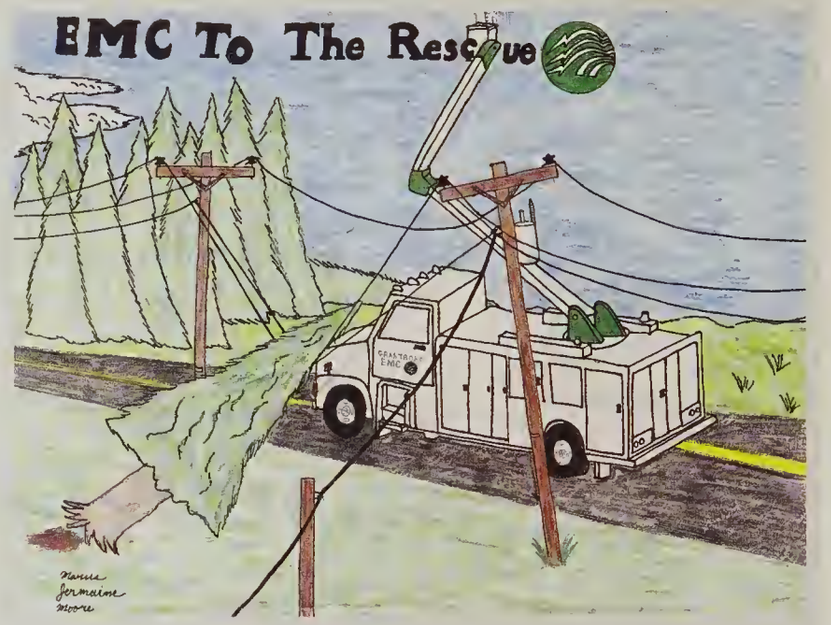
Keep helping people

On Friday, July 12, 1996, Hurricane Bertha hit the North Carolina coast. It started to cause problems with the power, and it started to get a whole lot worse outside. Suddenly the power went out thanks to a large pine tree and 74 mph wind. It was tough going through all the whirling wind for hours.

The next day, Hurricane Bertha was gone, and people were cleaning the debris and repairing houses. Bertha sent a tornado through Aurora, tearing down dozens of lines and flooding streets and piers. It took four days to get power back on, and as usual the Grantsboro EMC (Tideland Electric) was to the rescue and the power was up and running.

I really appreciate what you all have done. People have depended on you. I'm sure everyone appreciates how you work around the clock. You are the best power company in the area. Don't stop working. Keep helping people.

Marus Jermaine Moore
Aurora
Tideland



Marus Jermaine Moore is a 7th grader in Aurora. He began drawing (and drawing very well) as a 5th grader in Ron Clark's class at Snowdon Elementary School.

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21	----	----	13.30	12.07	22.75	19.68	38.50	32.37
22	----	----	13.30	12.07	22.75	19.68	38.50	32.37
23	----	----	13.30	12.07	22.75	19.68	38.50	32.37
24	----	----	13.30	12.07	22.75	19.68	38.50	32.37
25	----	----	13.30	12.07	22.75	19.68	38.50	32.37
26	----	----	13.38	12.16	22.96	19.90	38.93	32.81
27	----	----	13.47	12.16	23.18	19.90	39.37	32.81
28	----	----	13.56	12.25	23.40	20.12	39.81	33.25
29	----	----	13.65	12.25	23.62	20.12	40.25	33.25
30	----	----	13.65	12.33	23.62	20.34	40.25	33.68
31	----	----	13.73	12.33	23.84	20.34	40.68	33.68
32	----	----	13.82	12.42	24.06	20.56	41.12	34.12
33	----	----	13.91	12.42	24.28	20.56	41.56	34.12
34	----	----	14.00	12.51	24.50	20.78	42.00	34.56
35	----	----	14.26	12.68	25.15	21.21	43.31	35.43
36	----	----	14.70	12.95	26.25	21.87	45.50	36.75
37	----	----	15.22	13.30	27.56	22.75	48.12	38.50
38	----	----	15.75	13.65	28.87	23.62	50.75	40.25
39	----	----	16.45	14.08	30.62	24.71	54.25	42.43
40	----	----	17.06	14.61	32.15	26.03	57.31	45.06
41	----	----	17.93	15.13	34.34	27.34	61.68	47.68
42	----	----	18.90	15.75	36.75	28.87	66.50	50.75
43	----	----	20.03	16.62	39.59	31.06	72.18	55.12
44	----	----	21.43	17.41	43.09	33.03	79.18	59.06
45	----	----	22.92	18.37	46.81	35.43	86.62	63.87

Call for more information on amounts and products

MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	$50,000		$100,000		$250,000		$500,000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
46	----	----	24.58	19.33	50.96	37.84	94.93	68.68
47	----	----	26.16	20.38	54.90	40.46	102.81	73.93
48	----	----	27.82	21.35	59.06	42.87	111.12	78.75
49	----	----	29.57	22.40	63.43	45.50	119.87	84.00
50	----	----	31.50	23.62	68.25	48.56	129.50	90.12
51	----	----	33.86	25.02	74.15	52.06	141.31	97.12
52	----	----	36.48	26.60	80.71	56.00	154.43	105.00
53	----	----	39.63	28.43	88.59	60.59	170.18	114.18
54	----	----	43.48	30.62	98.21	66.06	189.43	125.12
55	27.43	20.08	47.86	33.16	109.15	72.40	211.31	137.81
56	29.92	21.56	52.85	36.13	121.62	79.84	236.25	152.68
57	32.68	23.10	58.36	39.20	135.40	87.50	263.81	168.00
58	35.65	24.76	64.31	42.52	150.28	95.81	293.56	184.62
59	38.89	26.60	70.78	46.20	166.46	105.00	325.93	203.00
60	42.30	28.52	77.61	50.05	183.53	114.62	360.06	222.25
61	45.98	30.58	84.96	54.16	201.90	124.90	396.81	242.81
62	49.87	32.76	92.75	58.53	221.37	135.84	435.75	264.68
63	53.98	35.08	100.97	63.17	241.93	147.43	476.87	287.87
64	58.36	37.53	109.72	68.07	263.81	159.68	520.62	312.37
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Commentary

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Readers' comments

Prolific plants may not be terrific plants

After reading the letter from the gentleman from Manns Harbor ["Can bamboo help here?", Commentary, Sept. 1998], I thought some response from the western part of the state was in order. He got me to thinking:

How many years ago was it that one over-zealous and under-experienced county agent convinced cattle farmers to plant the multiflora rose as a substitute for post and wire fencing? It worked, all right, but those who tried it ended up with more fences than field. This plant is so prolific, it's not natural! On my place I do battle with it constantly. If I didn't, I'd find myself awakened one morning with a kiss from a handsome young prince come to rescue this Snow White-haired lady trapped in her trailer by some wicked multiflora briars.

And honeysuckle: Once it gets started you can't stop it. A honeysuckle vine will climb an obliging weed all summer, and come fall, when it's time for the weed to drop to the ground, it can't, because by now the vine is strong enough to hold up itself and the weed as well. Which is what the honeysuckle intended to start with, for now it's an easy stretch from the weed to the next level, perhaps the lower branches of a sapling. A honeysuckle has no mercy. Like a snake it will coil itself around a sapling with a grip of death. In a few years it will have squeezed the trunk of the sapling into a permanent corkscrew shape. I have a friend who combs the swamps and wild places for these hapless saplings, from which he makes elegant walking canes. Honeysuckle has been with us so long that few people realize that it too is an import. The multiflora rose and the honeysuckle share one redeeming virtue: Both have a deceptively delightful fragrance.

Privet is another import gone wild – literally. As long as a privet hedge is kept clipped and not allowed to bloom, privet can more or less be kept under control. If you've got one, keep those flower buds from forming, because once a privet has flowered and set berries, you've lost all authority you ever had over it. For one thing, birds love the dark blue berries and take them everywhere. For another thing, privet is sneaky. If you cut it off at the top of the ground and it comes back and you cut it off again and you think this time you got it – think again. Pretty soon you will see brand new baby privet a few feet away. On a straight line between the old cut off stalk and the baby privet, about two inches under the ground you will find a runner root from the old stalk. Privet will give up, but it will not give in. I have dug up underground runners four and five feet long. But alas, you can't dig 'em all. Small privets that sprout from seed or from along the runners are easy to pull up, so I pull them up and snag them by the roots in the crotch of a tree where they will die.

continued on next page

The apple of her eye

Rebecca Spurlin, age 7, wrote this poem on her own after learning about apples from her teacher, Mrs. Shelley Allen, and after going on a field trip to an apple farm in Hendersonville. She is a second grader at Cliffside School in Rutherford County.

Apples

Apples start from a seed.
Apples are something that we need.
Apples have a star inside.
Apples are North Carolina's pride.

Kathy Dobbins, volunteer
Kathy Tuttle, teacher's assistant
Cliffside

The apple of her eye

This is my son, Payton Bolick. He's 2 1/2 years old. There are about four apple trees in our front yard, but this is his favorite.

Payton is a true mountain boy. He sat in this tree for an hour eating that apple and watching his dad mow.

We love North Carolina. Thank you, Blue Ridge Electric, for wonderful service all year long. We love your magazine.

Sharon H. Bolick
Lenoir

Corn beads

I am writing for my father, Chester Williams, who still has my grandmother's house in Engelhard.

We wonder if any readers know about a small, shiny gray seed that my grandmother used to grow. She called them corn beads. The seeds were picked and dried and strung to wear as necklaces. They were supposed to cure goiters.

We would like to try and grow some of these seeds and would appreciate any information anyone might give.

Jan Williams
327 Gainsborough Sq.
Chesapeake, VA 23320-4992

Prolific plants continued

And kudzu – the plant that ate the South. The highway department decided this giant beanstalk was the very thing to control erosion along the roadway's edge, and so we ordered a bunch of them from somewhere far away, hoping they could tolerate the poor soils and adverse growing conditions found along our southern highways. How little we knew! It was like throwing slop to hogs. The kudzu vines dug in. Hot, cold, wet, dry, acid, alkaline – it was all the same. Not only has kudzu covered the earth, it also covered houses, barns, abandoned motor vehicles, and occasionally some slow moving dogs and cats. One has to admit that in summer kudzu hides a multitude of sins, but in winter not only are the flaws of the landscape exposed, but the less comely parts of the kudzu as well.

And now, someone wants to use bamboo for something besides fishing poles. For one thing you can't kill it. Unless some of the new herbicides will kill it, I only know of one thing that will, and that is salt. Even our little native canes are hard to control, let alone bamboo. Imported bamboo grows fast; it grows were you want it to, and it also grows where you don't want it. Bamboo has that kind of an attitude.

Marjorie Rose
Lake Toxaway

Thank You

Thanks for Tri-County EMC and cartoons

I would like to commend Tri-County Electric for the swift job they did restoring our lights during Hurricane Bonnie. When the lights went out, I got a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach, remembering the 10 days we were without electricity during Fran. But within about four hours our power was restored and all was well.

Also, I would like to say that I have enjoyed reading the Carolina Country magazine for many years, and I especially like the cartoons by Donna Hardy. I have cut out several and sent them to friends. Keep up the good work, and keep those cartoons coming.

Suzie Baker
Pink Hill

Light Lines by Donna Hardy

Jukeboxes make a comeback

Due to the desire of the baby-boomers to relive their past, some of our preference to things we collect and display in our homes is changing. After all, the VW is back.

Our latest passion is jukeboxes. This is one of eight jukeboxes we have collected. We found this one in Franklin, N.C. Prices can range in the thousands for some of the very rare ones, to a few hundred for not so rare.

In the North this is a big thing. It is catching on fast in the South. There are places to order parts, rebuild amps, anything you need to restore these beautiful machines. And, guys, they use electricity.

Goldie Ribera
879 Jess Cove Rd.
Clyde, NC 28721

Make your own decaf tea

I recently heard the owner of the Tudor Rose Tearoom tell how one can easily decaffinate their own tea at home.

Items needed: a kettle for boiling water, a teapot, tea bags or tea and a teaball First, boil the water in an open kettle. (Boiling for five minutes will drive off much of the chlorine in the water.) Place teabags or teaball and tea in the teapot. Cover the tea with boiling water and steep for 10 seconds. Pour off and discard this water. (This also preheats the teapot.) Add boiling water to the teapot and steep as normal. The tea served will now be almost completely decaffeinated.

Bill Seiple
Raleigh

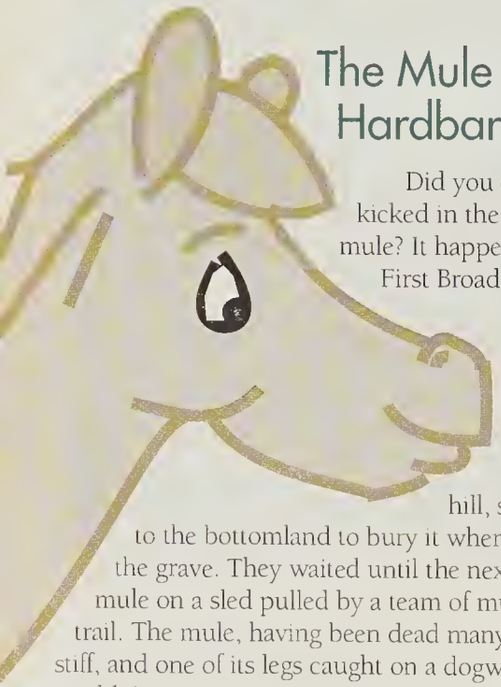
The Mule at Hardbargain Creek and Other Stories in North Carolina History

It's interesting that many of you, when submitting entries for "The Finest Story in North Carolina History," sent stories of personal history. So we figured that personal and family stories are part of our state's history as much as any stories that get into books or are passed from generation to generation.

The judges selected the stories on these pages as fine examples of North Carolina history. We tend to believe the personal stories and hope the others are true.

We are looking forward to 12 more months of your stories and pictures. (See page 12.) Thanks to all of you who work so hard and passionately on them. We also appreciate all the encouragement we get from people who enjoy reading these.

—MG



The Mule at Hardbargain Creek

Did you ever hear of a man getting kicked in the head and killed by a dead mule? It happened on the hill between the First Broad and Hardbargain Creek.

The mule died on top of the hill about where South Mountain Industrial Institute was located. The earth was too hard and dry to bury the mule on the hill, so they decided to move it to the bottomland to bury it where it would be easier to dig the grave. They waited until the next morning, loaded the dead mule on a sled pulled by a team of mules and started down the trail. The mule, having been dead many hours, was very cold and stiff, and one of its legs caught on a dogwood tree near the trail and wouldn't pass.

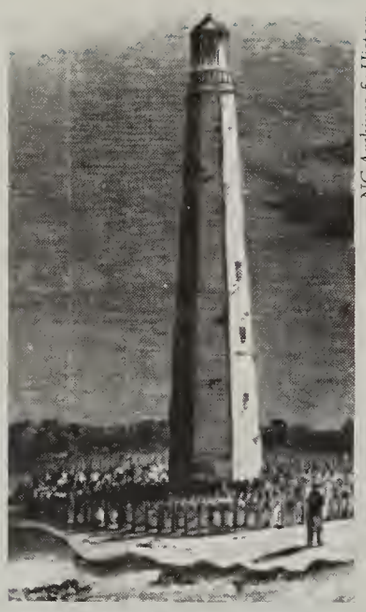
One of the men got an ax and chopped off the dogwood limb, but he was on the danger side of the limb, and the stiff leg of the dead mule hit the man in the head and killed him.

Three graves are located on the hill now. The one marked with a fieldstone is the one kicked and killed by the dead mule.

Tom Melton
Submitted for Tom by Karen D. McCall
Bostic
Rutherford EMC

Alexander Hamilton and the Burrs

Although neither Alexander Hamilton nor Aaron Burr were from North Carolina, their lives touched our state's history in very interesting ways.



NC Archives & History

The first lighthouse at Hatteras.

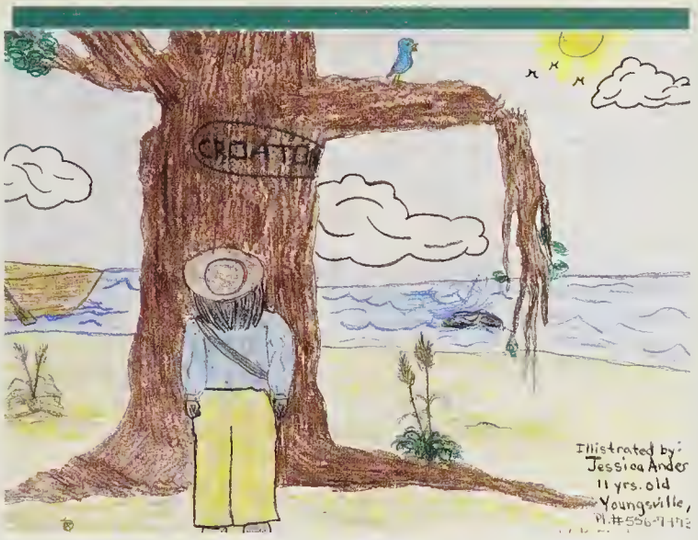
Alexander Hamilton was a young man aboard a ship bound for New York when his ship ran into a terrible storm and caught fire off Hatteras. The captain did not know where they were, nor how close to the deadly shoals of North Carolina's coast.

Mr. Hamilton swore that if it should ever be in his power, he would see a light built on that dangerous spot. Later, as Secretary of the Treasury in 1794, he was able to get a bill passed authorizing the construction of the first Hatteras lighthouse. Finally built in 1802, it was over 100 feet tall and lit by kerosene. The old foundations are still there.

In 1804, former U.S. vice president Aaron Burr was discredited when he killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel. In 1812, Theodosia Burr, Aaron Burr's beloved only child, was believed to have perished in North Carolina's coastal waters. Her ship was almost within sight of Mr. Hamilton's lighthouse.

Years later, a woman living on the coast of North Carolina gave her doctor an old portrait of a beautiful young lady. She claimed her husband had taken the painting from a sinking ship in the early 1800s. The doctor later had the portrait examined by North Carolina's Art Society. They verified that it was genuine. They were also able to identify the lady in the painting as Theodosia Burr, who disappeared in our coastal waters while on her way to join her father.

Betsy Johnson
Sanford
Central EMC



"Gone to Croatan"

English settlers came for a third try to Roanoke Island in 1587. The people made a small settlement. A child was born shortly after they landed. Her name was Virginia Dare. She was the first English baby born in the New World. Governor John White, her grandfather, was forced to go to England for supplies. He had to go in order to keep everyone alive. John White wanted to be able to know where they were, just in case they weren't on the island when he returned. They promised to somehow tell him where they were if they left the island.

When he returned, John White found the word "Croatoan" on a tree and ruins of some houses. The entire colony of 117 people had disappeared. Today it is called the "Lost Colony."

Tree-ring data shows that it may have been a very bad drought that made the colonists leave. It still remains a mystery. My opinion is that they went to Croatan (Hatteras Island) to get away from the drought.

Jessica Marie Anderson, age 11
Youngsville
Wake EMC

"I Still Don't Believe It!"

Born in the community of Todd and jerked up by the seat of his pants with no seat in them most of the time, my Mister shares many stories with me.

When electricity first came to the Willet Miller family, who lived close to my Mister's family, they were among the first to have an electric radio. My Mister went running in to tell his dad, Mr. Christian Moretz, "Willets got a radio and they are listening to The Grand Ole Opry! Let's go hear it!"

Mr. Christian replied, "There ain't no way he can hear the Opry all the way from Nashville, even if he HAS electricity!"

Being between the ages 10 and 14, my Mister kept on begging his dad to go hear it. Finally his dad said, "All right! If you will shut your mouth, I will go with you. But I still don't believe it."

They did indeed go listen to the electric radio. Mr. Christian and my Mister really had a wonderful time, and my Mister will not ever forget about it. Nor will the folk you guys serve and work so diligently for, making sure we all see the lights. Thank you very much.

By the way, my Mister, V. Glenn Moretz, turned 88 on January 15, 1998. There have been many moons since electricity first started.

Catherine "Porky" Moretz
Deep Gap
Blue Ridge Electric

The Christmas Sting

When I was about 6 years old in the early 1930s, I was at my Aunt Maudie's and Uncle Luther's house for Christmas. Back then almost everyone used the native holly for a Christmas tree. The tree stood resplendent with its red berries. Strings of draped popcorn, sweet gum balls dipped in flour paste, and colored paper chains completed the decorations.

What we didn't know was that there was a wasp nest in the tree. Those vicious things could hardly wait to be thawed out in the comforting warmth of Aunt Maudie's parlor. We had finished singing "Deck the Halls" and were ready for our feast of stuffed goose, collards, sweet potatoes and lemon cake. Uncle Luther, already in high spirits from the eggnog, was sampling the popcorn on the tree. Aunt Maudie was admonishing him for eating the decorations.

Suddenly I heard a thud and felt the floor tremble. I didn't see Uncle Luther fall. Aunt Maudie noticed the wasp on his neck and killed it with a quick stomp of her spool-heel shoe. (I thought she should have waited until it was off his neck.) After that things got lively. Aunt Maudie did her bug-eyed terror look, struck a beeline for the door and sent me falling flat on my back. (Have you ever been run over by a short, dumpy woman in a hurry?) The odd looking blur that flashed by was Uncle Luther with streamers of popcorn flailing madly.

As I dashed for the door, my elbow knocked the huge goose from the table into the wood box, where it gave birth to what seemed like gallons of mushy stuffing that spewed out in a somewhat unsavory manner.

Uncle Luther's encounter with the wasps on the Christmas Day will be a lasting one in my memory.

Doris Britton
Rich Square
Roanoke Electric

Robert Taylor Hunts for Quail

Robert Taylor, a movie star during the 1950s, a handsome hero on the order of Clark Gable, was also an avid hunter. One week he and some of his rich friends were hunting on one of those fancy games preserves where horses and dogs were used to hunt quail. They were getting started when Mr. Taylor approached George, the handyman who knew all about the hunt. The guests all sought George's advice in matters of the hunt. After looking over the string of horses in the corral, Mr. Taylor said, "George, can I shoot off this horse?"

George said, "Yes sir, you can shoot off that horse."

Well, the hunt proceeded and quail were found. The dogs crept forward, pointed, then froze. Mr. Taylor eased up on his horse, and when the birds flushed, he shot.

The horse went crazy. He kicked and bucked and deposited Mr. Taylor and his $1,500 shotgun in the Carolina dust.

Robert Taylor looked up and shouted, "George I thought you said I could shoot off this horse!"

George replied, "Yes sir, you can shoot off the horse. You shot on him."

Dennis E. Ward
Seven Springs
Tri-County EMC

Ballad of George Washington Miller

He was Pvt. George Washington Miller of the 31st North Carolina Regiment, but to many of the men in gray he was just a ballad singer.

At the end of the Civil War, Gen. Thomas Clingman was in possession of some gold. He gave Pvt. Miller charge over this gold thinking that the ballad singer could get by the Yankees with it. And he did.

But when Miller got to Aversboro, too much liquor loosened his tongue, and Yankee raiders got word of the gold. They captured Miller and tried to make him talk. But Miller refused to tell the whereabouts of the gold, so he was hanged from the limb of a locust tree. While he was dying on that tree, the Yankees figured that their chance of finding the gold would die with him.

So they cut him down and took him to Kit Barbee's stage shop, where he again refused to talk. So they strung him up again. They nearly did him in this time, but again they decided not to kill their last chance.

They fed him and took him to Myatt's Mill about 15 miles further, and for the third time they hoisted him up. This time some Rebels came upon him as he hung there dying, and they scattered the Yanks and freed Miller.

The half-dead man was revived and was left in the care of friends until his throat healed. He was rewarded for his loyalty by being set up as a shopkeeper. Alas, a merchant's life was not for Miller; but that's another story.

Vicky Joyner
Dunn
South River EMC

Send us your stories and photos. Earn $50.

Our series on "the finest" of North Carolina, written and photographed by our readers, became real popular during 1998. "What a great way to get to know other people across this state," one of you told us. So we decided to run it again in 1999.

When they choose a selection for publication each month, judges seem to like stories that are clearly expressed, from the heart, and full of North Carolina character. (Most of those we receive have some or all of these qualities, so choosing a few is difficult work.)

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Typed or e-mail, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
4. Include your name, mailing address, electric co-op, and phone number.
5. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. *(We will not return others.)*
6. We pay $50 for each submission published in this series.
7. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com

The 1999 Themes

February
The Finest Car I Ever Knew (Yours or someone else's.)
Deadline: Dec. 15

March
My Advice for the U.S. Congress
(They represent you.)
Deadline: Jan. 15

April
The Funniest Story I Ever Heard
(The truer the better.)
Deadline: Feb. 15

May
The Finest North Carolina Road I've Ever Been Down
(Anywhere in the state.)
Deadline: March 15

June
The Finest North Carolina Music I Ever Heard
(What makes it so?)
Deadline: April 15

Juiy-December Themes to be published later

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Gas and kerosene supplemental heaters could raise pollution levels inside manufactured homes

By Sandy Perry

Some people who live in manufactured homes are using supplemental heaters that could be dangerous to their health. Instead of relying on the factory-installed heating system, people are risking exposure to noxious fumes by using gas and kerosene heaters for supplemental or backup heating. With the increasing popularity of gas logs, in particular, this trend is on the rise.

Consumer-installed supplementary heaters such as portable kerosene heaters, particularly vent-free models, can increase air pollutant and moisture levels in homes. Most manufacturers advise against using unvented (or "vent-frec") heaters. However, the practice continues.

Government and industry studies have examined this problem in the laboratory and in occupied homes. Until recently, the impact on occupant health from using consumer-installed heaters — which may or may not have venting capability — was undocumented. The circumstantial evidence that these homeowner-installed heaters might cause health problems led the National Manufactured Housing Alliance to take a closer look, measuring the actual air pollutant levels created by these types of heaters in manufactured homes.

While thc study size was small, the results strongly suggest that using after-market supplemental combustion heaters can cause health problems. More than 40 percent of the tested homes had measured carbon monoxide and/or carbon dioxide levels that exceeded the acceptable levels set by the federal government. The results indicate that people using these heaters regularly, or for backup heat during power failures, can be exposed to potentially harmful levels of pollutants.

The tests measured concentration levels for three gases that are linked to poor indoor air quality: carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. The testing took place in North Carolina and Tennessee earlier this year. Of about 1,500 contacted, a sample of 21 single-section and double-section homes built under the HUD standards enacted in 1994 qualified for testing. Of the survey group, five homes had vented gas logs, two had unvented gas logs, 12 had portable kerosene heaters and two had vented wood fireplaces.

The test involved turning on all 21 heaters for one to two hours. The three pollutants, along with air temperature and humidity levels, were measured continuously before, during and after the test. During the two-hour test, several homes reached higher than acceptable levels of pollutants. Several more were predicted to accumulate high levels of pollutants during seasonal cold spells or power outages.

One surprising finding had to do with the vented gas log heaters. All five homeowners reported operating their gas logs with the chimney flue damper closed to "get more heat out of the gas logs." Unfortunately, the price paid for this extra heat is increased pollutant levels of gases like carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. With proper use of vented gas log inserts in a factory-installed fireplace this concern goes away.

Manufacturers routinely build tight homes and control outdoor air exchange through the use of HUD-mandated whole house ventilation systems. However, the ventilation rates achieved by these systems are generally far too low to rid the home of the pollutants generated by supplementary heaters.

More ventilation is not the answer, because it would bring higher energy usage. The solution must address the major reason homeowners purchase supplementary heating systems in the first place—the desire to reduce energy costs. A far more cost-effective and health-conscious purchase is a high-efficiency heating system, such as a heat pump, that is sold with the home.

This preliminary study, while limited by a small sample size, indicates that consumer health and safety could be at risk when homeowners modify the manufacturer's designed heating strategy. Manufacturers of these homes should warn consumers about the risks associated with supplemental heaters.

In 1999, the Alliance will expand its testing to a wider geographical area to examine a larger sample of homes. For more information or a copy of the study, contact the National Manufactured Housing Alliance at 220 West 93rd Street, 11th floor, New York, New York, 10025, (212) 666-7771, fax (212) 666-5389, e-mail: nmha@earthlink.net.

Sandy Perry chairs the National Manufactured Housing Alliance. She is manager of residential marketing for the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation.

Little Angels Can't Huddle

By Sherry W. Boone

Years ago, my Grandpa and Grandma Morgan were active in a little Baptist church in the foothills of North Carolina. Well, Grandpa was active anyway. He was the janitor, choir leader and church treasurer for years. But he didn't start at the bottom and work his way up. He carried out all three simultaneously.

Grandma did her part, too. Each Sunday morning she saw to it that she and their seven children were ready to go back to church with Grandpa, who already had been there once that morning either to open the windows or build a fire, depending on the time of year it was.

I just know, in my heart, that my grandma gave the church her best at Christmastime. I can't know for sure, since I wasn't there, but I have a pretty good imagination.

Several Sundays before Christmas, when the announcements were made between Sunday school and preaching, Grandpa would have said (he made the announcements, too), "It's time to plan our Christmas play." (I don't think he would have used the word "pageant.")

"We need volunteers. Who wants to be Mary?"

The prettiest young girl in the congregation raised her hand knowing full well that she'd get the part. (Just where in the Bible does it tell us Mary was pretty?)

"How about Joseph?" Grandpa asked as he looked out into the congregation for last year's Joseph, who was happy to volunteer because he liked Mary a lot.

Next: the travelers who would come from afar.

"We'll need a few shepherds, three kings and a wise man or two," Grandpa would say, and hands went up all over the room. He probably asked one of the ladies to write down the names of the volunteers. Grandpa could write, but he wanted to share the responsibility.

But he didn't ask for angels. He didn't have to. He and Grandma had an angel band of their own. Seven little girls to be exact! Their ages ranged from cherubs to teenagers.

I can see Grandma, in my mind, bleaching every sheet she owned, and some that she borrowed, to make their robes. She was very creative, so I am sure that haloes and wings were no problem for her.

The biggest problem with the robes would have been on the night of the play. You know how little girls are. They've always got a secret to share. Even the tiny ones. And it's almost impossible to whisper a secret without making contact, by cupping your hands onto someone's head and huddling together. But little angles can't huddle. If they do, they get crooked haloes and uneven wings!

So, Ruth and Louise kept watch over the haloes and made sure all wings stayed in good flight condition as the "mini-multitude" of the heavenly host awaited their turn to be on stage. They were also, no doubt, the peacemakers who saw to it that the "littlest" angles, Maxine and Carolyn, didn't get pushed around by a rowdy shepherd boy in the back room. But, then, Little Maxine was a redhead. She could take care of herself.

My mama, Delilah, was the oldest angel, and was probably the most bashful. So, I don't think she would have been the angel that said, "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savoir, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you. Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.'"

No, I think that part went to Frieda. She had a clear, strong voice and truly loved to talk.

Hazel would have been the angel in charge making sure her sisters marched in on time. She was a good organizer. I can almost hear Hazel and Mama singing, "Angels from the Realms of Glory." Mama's carrying the melody, Hazel the alto. Mama agreed to sing only if Hazel sang with her.

After the angel announced the birth of the Christ Child, Mary and Joseph received the visitors and accepted their gifts for Him. The congregation then stood and softly sang, "Silent Night."

The sweet aroma of apples would drift across the room. And as they left for home, each child would pick up a small bag containing an apple, and an orange, a few nuts and a candy stick. The excitement that only Christmas brings would be in the hearts of everyone when they returned home that night.

The High Country is still one of the best areas of North Carolina to see Christmas pageants. Every year, many wonderful plays are presented in our small, country churches. If you go to see one of them, the Spirit of Christmas will fall on you like the soft mountain snow.

Merry Christmas, everyone.

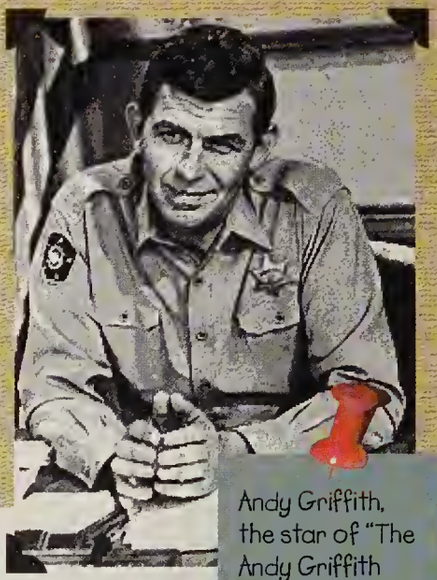
Sherry W. Boone, a member of Blue Ridge Electric, writes when she's not working with her husband in their country store in Zionville.

Where did Babe Ruth hit his first home run as a professional player?

What famous musician was born in Hamlet?

Where did Jesse Jackson go to college?

Notes from



Andy Griffith, the star of "The Andy Griffith Show," is a native of Mt. Airy.

1. The first airport in North Carolina was opened in Greensboro in 1929.
2. North Carolina was the first state to have a state-supported symphony when the North Carolina State Symphony Orchestra was created by the General Assembly's "Horn Tootin" bill in 1943.
3. None of the three men who signed the Declaration of Independence for North Carolina were born in the state. They were Joseph Hewes, John Penn and William Hooper.
4. In 1894, pharmacist Lunsford Richardson invented Vicks VaporRub in Greensboro.
5. F. Scott Fitzgerald and John Ehle are two famous American writers who lived in Asheville, where Thomas Wolfe grew up.
6. Hinton James walked 150 miles from New Hanover County to be the first and only student enrolled for the first two weeks at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on February 12, 1795.
7. The first piece of airmail ever sent arrived in Greensboro.
8. The first fire engine in North Carolina was named "The General Greene."
9. In January 1856, the North Carolina railroad was completed and the first train to run on the railroad arrived in Greensboro.
10. UNCG was once an all girls school named The State Normal and Industrial School for Girls. It started with 198 girls and 2 buildings in 1892.
11. In Harnett County, McLeod Creek was once an Inland Sea. This limestone bed now holds 8 feet of fossilized shells.
12. North Carolina's first school of higher education for African-Americans, known today as North Carolina A&T State University, was established in 1893. The students' expenses were a total of $6 a month.
13. The civil rights sit-ins began in Greensboro on February 1, 1960 by four North Carolina A&T State University students at Woolworth's downtown Greensboro.

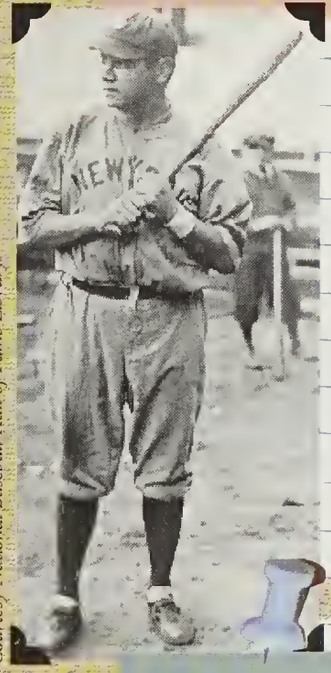
NC Lighthouses

Built in 1823, the lighthouse at Ocracoke is the oldest still-operating lighthouse in North Carolina. The oldest lighthouse still standing resides on Smith Island built in 1795. There are six lighthouses that are still operating in North Carolina: Currituck Banks, Oregon Inlet (Bodie Island), Cape Hatteras, Ocracoke Inlet Cape Lookout and Cape Fear River lighthouses. The Cape Hatteras lighthouse is the tallest brick lighthouse in the world, standing at 208 feet tall.

North Carolina's History

The Alice Freeman Palmer Memorial Institute, an independent high school for blacks founded in Sedalia by Charlotte Hawkins Brown, graduated more than 1,000 students between 1905 and 1971. It became in 1983 North Carolina's first State Historic Site to honor an African-American and a woman..

Susie Sharp, a native of North Carolina, was the first woman elected to our state's Supreme Court in 1949. She was the first female Chief Justice in North Carolina in 1974 and the second woman in the country to hold this office.



Courtesy National Baseball Hall of Fame Library.

Babe Ruth hit his first professional home run in Fayetteville.

In 1957 in Chatham County, prehistoric animals were discovered that dated back 180 million years.

14. John Coltrane, one of the world's greatest jazz musicians, was born in Hamlet.
15. Jesse Jackson attended North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro.
16. Edward Diggs became the first African-American student admitted to UNC at Chapel Hill on April 25, 1951.
17. The National Headquarters of the Baldheaded Men of America is located in Morehead City.
18. North Carolina's first public school opened in Rockingham County on January 22, 1840.
19. One of the first depots for the "Underground Railroad" was in southwest Guilford County.
20. In 1901 in Dare County, radio pioneer Reginald Fessenden began experiments that led to the first wireless broadcast of music and voices.
21. In 1880, the first telephone came to Greensboro; however it had no earpiece and the conversation could be heard throughout the room.
22. Dr. Henry Louis Smith, a professor at Davidson College, established the use of x-rays in the medical field in 1896.
23. The North Carolina Brass Band has been in operation since 1769 and is the oldest brass band in America that is still practicing.
24. The first Girl Scout Troop in North Carolina was founded in Leaksville on November 28, 1914.
25. In 1871, James Whistler, who came from Clarkton, painted the portrait "Whistler's Mother," that hangs in the Louvre Art Museum in Paris.
26. The first intercollegiate football game in the state was between UNC and Wake Forest in October 8, 1888.
27. In 1862, Dr. Richard Jordan Gatling of Hertford County invented the first successful machine gun. It fired 200 shots in a minute, but he kept working until it could fire 2,000 shot in a minute.

These notes on North Carolina's history were compiled by The Southern Historical News, Inc., publisher of historical newspapers in the South. The publisher can be reached at P.O. Box 1068, Hiram, Ga. 30141.

Carolina Country reprints these notes with permission, but we have not verified all the information.

Carolina close-up

Compiled by Renee Gannon

Magazine for teen girls aims at creativity, not boys

Move over, Tiger Beat. Girls want more than just gossip. That's why editor Frances Dowell launched Dream/Girl Magazine in Carrboro last fall—she wanted to give girls something to think about.

The magazine includes reviews of books, music and movies, as well as articles on all aspects of the arts, writing projects, interviews with successful artists and writers, and more. The magazine invites girls to send in their book reviews and story ideas. The magazine also sponsors fiction and poetry contests and publishes the winning entries.

"Most of the girls I know are very artistic and creative, but not many magazines reflect that," says Dowell. "I wanted to put together an arts magazine aimed at girls 11 to 15, a magazine that celebrates things like writing and music instead of lip gloss and Hollywood stars."

News of Dream/Girl has spread nationwide, with more than 250 bookstores across the country currently offering the magazine.

A one-year, four-issue subscription to Dream/Girl is $10. Write to Dream/Girl at P.O. Box 639, Carrboro, NC 27510, or call (919) 932-1136.

Agriculture Exchange

Grants offered for persons interested in agricultural training abroad

The Communicating for Agriculture (CA) Scholarship and Education Foundation is awarding grants to young Americans interested in participating in an agricultural, horticultural, equine or enology (wine-making) exchange abroad. The grant money will be awarded to help fund trainee opportunities in any of the 21 countries that have an outbound exchange agreement with CA's exchange program.

Grants are available for trainees interested in going to Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Sweden or Switzerland. The length of stay ranges from three months to one year.

Trainees receive a monthly stipend, plus room and board. Trainees live and assist their hosts, taking part in day-to-day activities to allow them to learn about their area of interest and experience their host country's culture and lifestyle.

For 1999, the CA Foundation will award 25 grants valued between $350 to $2,000. Applications must be received by Jan. 1, 1999, and are judged on the requested area and how it will contribute to career goals, experience in the requested program area, length of stay and overall application.

To receive an application or for more information, contact: Beverly Gilmartin, CAEP Coordinator, 112 E. Lincoln, Box 677, Fergus Falls, MN 56538. Or phone (800) 432-3276 or visit the Web site at http://cainc.org.

Author discounts famous N.C. tale of hanged woman

Francis "Frankie" Silver, famous Appalachian ax murderer, was not the first woman executed in the state, reports Perry Deane Young in his book "The Untold Story of Frankie Silver."

Silver, hanged in 1833 for chopping up her abusive husband, wasn't even the first woman hanged in Burke County, part of which is now Mitchell County. "At least nine North Carolina women, whites and blacks, were hanged or burned at the stake before she was," states Young. Also contrary to common belief, Frankie and her husband Charles were not the subjects of the "Ballad of Frankie and Johnny," one of the most popular folk songs in U.S. history. The ballad originated in the Mississippi Delta.

"Undoubtedly today, Francis Silver would not be executed because she would be considered a victim of spousal abuse," Young says. "She claimed to have struck her husband with the ax while he was drunk and loading a rifle to shoot her."

In the book, Young describes mistakes made by her lawyer that eventually led to her demise. The most crucial mistake was letting Silver plead innocent to first-degree murder and deny that she killed Charles three days before Christmas 1831 in their isolated mountain cove home by the Toe River near the Tennessee line, reports Young. "Had she confessed before her trial rather than just before her execution, the jury likely would have considered how Charles frequently beat her and that she needed to care for an infant daughter."

Her years in jail and citizens' efforts to free her are also documented in the book. Copies of "The Untold Story of Frankie Silver" are available at bookstores or can be ordered from Down Home Press, P.O. Box 4126, Asheboro, NC 27204. It costs $14.95 plus $2 handling and 90 cents tax for N.C. residents.

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Christmas Tree Festival
Dec. 1-15, Boone
Appalachian Cultural Museum,
(828) 262-3117

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Dec. 2-19, Boone
Jones House Community
Center, (828) 262-4576

Festival of Trees
Dec. 3-6, Brevard
Silvermont Estate,
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Festival of Lights Parade
Dec. 3, Canton
(828) 648-7925

Christmas Benefit Concert
Dec. 4, Boone
Appalachian State University,
Farthing Auditorium,
(828) 262-3020

Chamber Open House
Dec. 4, Burnsville
(800) 948-1632

Holly Jolly Christmas
Dec. 4, Black Mountain
Downtown, (800) 669-2301

Christmas Parade
Dec. 5, Black Mountain
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(828) 669-2300

Christmas Parade
Dec. 5, Maggie Valley
(800) 334-9036

Special Santa Days
Dec. 5, 12, 19, Waynesville
Main Street, (800) 334-9036

Christmas Parade
Dec. 5, Burnsville
(800) 948-1632

Cove Creek Country Christmas
Dec. 5, Boone
(828) 297-2200

Christmas Parade
Dec. 5, Boone
Downtown, 1 p.m.,
(800) 852-9506

Choose & Cut Christmas Tree
Dec. 5-6, 12-13, Boone
Watauga County,
(800) 852-9506

Appalachian Potters Market
Dec. 5, Marion
McDowell High School
10 a.m., (704) 652-8610

Christmas Past, Revisited
Dec. 5-6, Statesville
Historic downtown,
(704) 878-3436

Christmas Tour of Homes
Dec. 6, West Jefferson
2 p.m.-6 p.m.,
(336) 246-4483

Tour of Homes
Dec. 6, Waynesville
(800) 334-9036

Miracle on 34th Street
Dec. 9, Boone
Musical, (800) 841-ARTS

Choral Winter Concert
Dec. 10, Boiling Springs
Boiling Springs Baptist Church,
7:30 p.m., (704) 482-5354

Mountaineer Christmas
Dec. 11, Kings Mountain
(704) 739-4755

Circle of Lights
Dec. 12, Black Mountain
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Holiday Tour of Homes
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Dec. 12, Waynesville
Main Street, (800) 334-9036

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Children's Handmade Holiday Festival
Dec. 13, Asheville
Folk Art Center, 10 a.m-
4 p.m., (828) 298-7928

Community Carol Candlelight Service
Dec. 13, Boone
First Baptist Church, 6 p.m.,
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Dec. 18-29, Blowing Rock
Comedy, (828) 295-9168

Santa at Sugar Mountain
Dec. 19-24, Banner Elk
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Holiday Tour of Country Inns
Dec. 20, Black Mountain
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Caroling Hayride
Dec. 20 & 27, Beech Mountain
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Seven Days of Christmas
Dec. 25-31, Maggie Valley
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Piedmont (between I-85 & I-95)

A Natural Christmas
Through Dec. 26, Asheboro
N.C. Zoological Park,
(800) 488-0444

Christmas Around the World
Through Dec. 31, Reidsville
Chinqua-Penn Plantation.
(336) 349-4576

A Christmas Carol
Dec. 1-5, Louisburg
Musical adaptation, Louisburg
College, (919) 496-2521

Christmas in the Village
Dec. 4-18, Pinehurst
Fridays & Saturdays,
(910) 295-2473

Best of Broadway
Dec. 4-20, Sanford
Christmas revue, Temple
Theatre, (919) 774-4512

Parade and Christmas Tree Lighting
Dec. 5, Southern Pines
Downtown, (910) 692-5848

Christmas Concert
Dec. 5-6, Southern Pines
Moore County Chorale
Society, Owens Auditorium,
(910) 692-1165

Christmas Open House
Dec. 6, Durham
Bennett Place,
(919) 383-4345

18th Century Christmas
Dec. 6, Pineville
James K. Polk Memorial,
(704) 889-7145

Farm Christmas Open House
Dec. 6, Aberdeen
Malcolm Blue Farm,
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Christmas Candlelight Tour
Dec. 6, Hillsborough
(919) 732-8156

Christmas Craft Show
Dec. 6, Hillsborough
Daniel Boone Village, Big Barn
Convention Center,
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Christmas Parade
Dec. 6, Mount Airy
2 p.m., (336) 789-1659

'Tis the Season
Dec. 7, Mount Airy
Play, Andy Griffith Playhouse,
(800) 286-6193

Christmas by Lamplight
Dec. 10, Pinnacle
Horne Creek Farm, 3 p.m.-7
p.m., (910) 325-2298

Historic Christmas
Dec. 11-12, Edenton
(919) 482-2637

A Christmas Carol
Dec. 11-13, Mount Airy
Andy Griffith Playhouse,
(800) 286-6193

Christmas by Candlelight
Dec. 11 & 18, Durham
Duke Homestead,
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Ellerbee Creek Railway, N.C.
Museum of Life and Science,
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Historic Christmas
Dec. 12-13, Halifax
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Holiday Tour of Homes
Dec. 12-13, Mount Airy
(336) 786-2244

Santa Train
Dec. 12-13, 19-20, Spencer
N.C. Transportation Museum,
(704) 636-2889

Christmas Open House
Dec. 13, Sedalia
Charlotte Hawkins Brown
Memorial, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.,
(910) 449-4846

Christmas Open House and Candlelight Tour
Dec. 13, Weaverville
Vance Birthplace,
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Christmas Candlelighting & Open House
Dec. 13, Sanford
Historic House in the Horseshoe,
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Christmas Lighting
Dec. 13, Cameron
(910) 245-7042

Holiday Open House
Dec. 13, Winston-Salem
Reynolda House, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.,
(336) 725-5325

Christmas Concert
Dec. 13, Southern Pines
Owens Auditorium, 2 p.m.,
free, (910) 695-3829

Living Christmas Tree Choir
Dec. 14-15 & 18-19, Ramseur
First Christian Church, 7:30
p.m., (336) 824-4066

Old Hebron Candlelight Service
Dec. 16, Macon, (252) 257-4033

Hans Brinker's Christmas
Dec. 21, Winston-Salem
N.C. School of the Arts, 7 p.m.,
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Through Dec. 6, Wilmington
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Christmas Open House
Dec. 6, Creswell
Somerset Place, (919) 797-4560

Festival of Trees
Dec. 6-8, Lumberton
Holiday Inn, benefits Hospice of
Robeson, (910) 671-5577

Parade and Open House
Dec. 6, Bath
Historic Bath, (919) 923-3971

Deck the Doors Tour
Dec. 4, 7, 11, 14, New Bern
Tryon Palace, (800) 767-1560

Candlelight Tours
Dec. 4-5, 11-12, 18-19,
New Bern
Tryon Palace, (800) 767-1560

Holiday Secrets Tour
Dec. 5, 9, 12, 16, New Bern
Tryon Palace, (800) 767-1560

Candlelight Christmas
Dec. 8-9, Murfreesboro
(919) 398-5922

Christmas at Harmony Hall
Dec. 10-13, White Oak
Harmony Hall Plantation,
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Dec. 11, Washington
Washington Civic Center, 7
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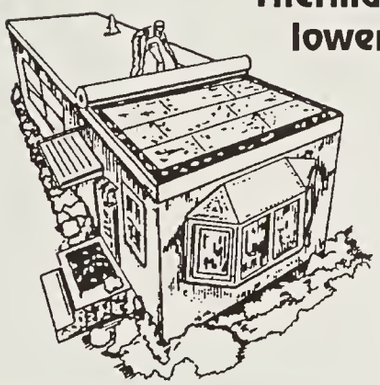

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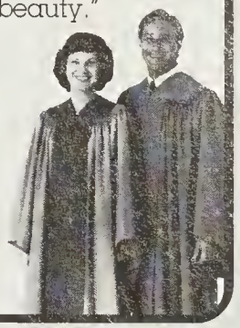

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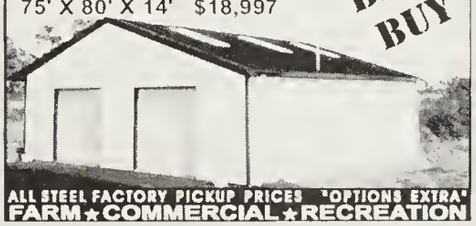

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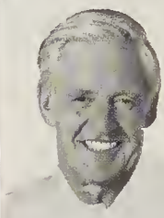

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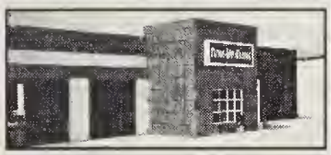
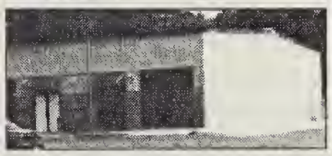

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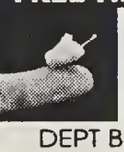
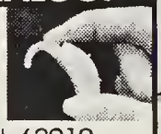

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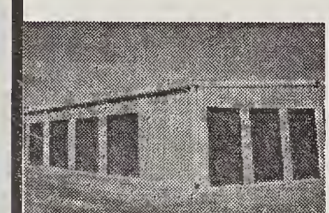

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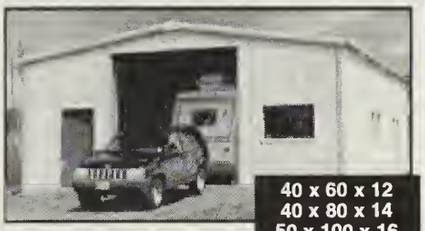

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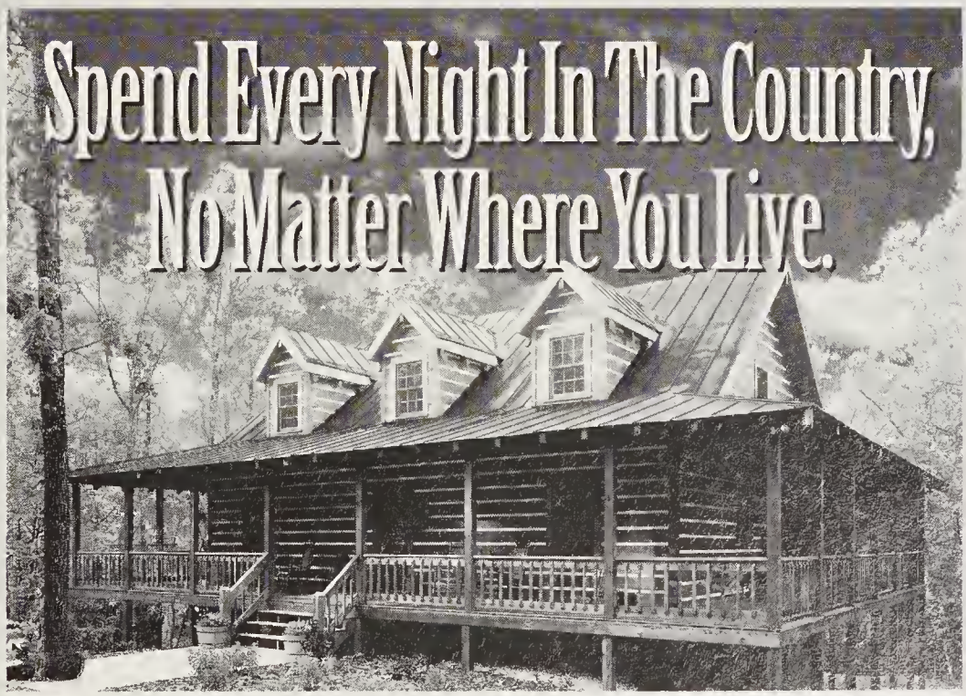

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Hank's gardening guide

by Hank Smith

Give the garden a general clean-up, if not already completed. Healthy broadleaves that have fallen or blown beneath shrubs and perennials usually make good overwinter mulch. Be thoughtful of garden friends—the birds. Supply them with fresh water and feed. They repay by helping to control insects. If spring-flowering bulbs are not in the ground, they should go soon. Tulip bulbs stored in the vegetable crisper should be planted this month. Place in groups of at least half-dozen bulbs of the same color for the best show next spring. As bare-root roses and fruit trees become available at your local nursery or garden center, make early selections. You'll be assured of quality plants. Curb the urge to do any heavy pruning until late winter. (Properly placed plants need a minimum of pruning.) Severe pruning now could stimulate new growth during a warm spell, growth that could be killed by a freeze later.

A holiday arrangement of sheared pine greens, mahonia, and a poinsettia bloom.

Rake ryegrass

If you've overseeded your permanent lawn with ryegrass for a winter green lawn, keep fallen leaves raked from it. Although cold hardy, ryegrass is very tender and cannot tolerate a blanket of leaves matting it down without causing serious injury.

Care of balled-and-burlapped plants

When transporting, lift by the ball of soil. Don't use the trunk or stems and branches as a handle. To do so can cause plant's roots to separate from soil of the ball. This destroys the advantage offered in balling-and-burlapping. Keep balled plants watered to prevent drying before they are planted. If plants cannot be put in ground immediately, "heel-in" by placing in a shallow trench, then cover with moist soil. This provides a more even soil condition, as well as preventing the root system from freezing during periods of low temperatures.

Careful shrub choices

Using wallpaper of several different designs in one room lends the same effect produced when every shrub in a foundation planting is a different variety. Group shrub plantings using at least three of a kind except when using an accent plant. The same holds true in shrubbery borders. Harmonious effects result largely from careful selection and grouping—whether applied to shrubs, trees or garden flowers.

Poinsettias as cut flowers

Ever-popular Christmas poinsettias are good subjects for use in holiday floral designs. Select blooms to be removed from the backside of a potted plant. Remove green leaves; let leaf scars "bleed" the milky juice a few minutes, then cut the cluster from the plant. Singe both the leaf scars and the cut ends with a lighted candle until bubbling ceases. When placed in an arrangement with seasonal greenery such as holly, cedar, spruce, fir, juniper and mistletoe branches, you create a timely seasonal accent. The lower branches of a Christmas tree, cut away when the tree is placed in the stand, are good sources of greenery. If poinsettia is unavailable, use red spray paint on both sides of a cluster of Southern Magnolia leaves. Simulate yellow blooms with a cluster of yellow-painted berries, such as pyracantha, holly or yellow Nandina, or artificial berries.

Check mulches

Since the worst of winter is yet to come, check shrubs to see that mulches are holding up. Replenish to a depth of four inches. This is especially important if you use a loose material such as pine straw. Mulches help to conserve moisture within the root area—especially important for plants that suffer loss of moisture due to winter winds blowing against foliage.

Winter watering

Only a brief period of time need be spent in preparing deciduous and evergreen plants to withstand winter damage. The havoc wreaked from frozen ground, winter winds and burning sun can be the greatest problem in preventing a healthy and trouble-free landscape next year. Plants can be winterkilled or damaged due to a lack of moisture at root level. Dead plants in early spring are obvious symptoms of winter injury. Winter sun and wind can cause brown leaves or large dead areas in evergreens such as junipers and yews, as well as rhododendrons and other broad-leaved evergreens. This may indicate inadequate sub-surface moisture. These damages usually are obvious the following spring and summer. Plants continue to give off moisture during winter months when the ground is frozen. Source of moisture to the root level is blocked, and the tree or shrub literally dries out. Water deeply before ground freezes. Newly planted trees and shrubs can be given additional protection by spraying with latex solution available at most garden centers. The same solution is of help in prolonging the life of greenery used in garlands and wreaths that must be out of a container of water.

Clean hedges, fence rows

Many weeds are host to both insects and diseases that attack various ornamental and vegetable plants. Weeds can carry these troubles from year to year. Fence rows, hedge rows and other non-cultivated areas should have a good cleaning of litter and plant parts beneath plants.

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Holiday Recipes

Chipped Beef Dip

Submitted by Nancy Gibson, Zebulon

1 cup chopped pecans
2 teaspoons butter
16 ounces cream cheese, softened
4 tablespoons milk
5 ounces dried beef, minced
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 cup sour cream
4 teaspoons minced onion

Sauté pecans in butter. Mix all other ingredients. Pour mixture into a 1 1/2 quart casserole dish and sprinkle pecans on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve with regular wheat thins.

Egg Nog

4 eggs, beaten
1/4 cup sugar or honey
1/4 teaspoon salt
3 cups milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
Nutmeg

Combine eggs with sugar and salt, add milk and vanilla. Serve cold in tall glasses and sprinkle with nutmeg. For a fluffy eggnog separate egg, beat whites until stiff, then fold into egg mixture. May be served hot or cold. Serves 4.

Festive Fudge

4 1/ 2 cups sugar
1 15-ounce can evaporated milk
12 ounces semi-sweet chocolate bits
3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, broken
1 pint marshmallow crème
1 cup chopped nuts

Bring sugar and milk to boil in large saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil 5 minutes, continuing to stir. Remove from heat and pour over chocolate bits, unsweetened chocolate, marshmallow crème and nuts. Mix until well blended. Pour into 9-by-13 inch buttered pan. Cut when firm.

Chocolate Covered Carolina Crunch

Submitted by Nancy Riddle, Morganton

4 cups quick-cooking oatmeal
1 cup light brown sugar
1/4 cup corn syrup
2/3 cup margarine
1/4 cup crunchy peanut butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
6-ounce package semi-sweet chocolate chips
6-ounce package butterscotch chips
2/3 cups crunchy peanut butter
Paraffin wax (small piece)

Combine first six ingredients together and press into a 9-inch by 13-inch pan. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 minutes. Melt chocolate chips, crunchy peanut butter, butterscotch chips and paraffin wax together in a saucepan. Pour mixture over crust and allow to cool. Cut into squares. (Make these as a gift!)

Red Velvet Pound Cake

Submitted by Sue Pittman, Youngsville

1 cup softened margarine (2 sticks)
1/2 cup Crisco
3 cups sugar
5 eggs
1/2 cup cocoa
1 cup sweetmilk
3 cups plain flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 large bottle red food coloring

Mix margarine, Crisco and sugar until creamy. Add eggs one at a time and beat well after adding each one. Add cocoa, flour and milk alternately until used up. Add baking powder, vanilla and red food coloring and mix until creamy. Bake in greased and floured tube pan at 300 degrees for 1 1/2 hours or until done.

North Carolina 4-H Youth Development
Presents
"Hands of Service"
by
Richard Tumbleston

Friends and supporters of the Cooperative Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program and Richard Tumbleston are pleased to present the Signed and Numbered Limited Edition, "Hands of Service." Funds collected from the sale of 1000 of the edition's 1600 signed and numbered reproductions will provide construction funds for the Eastern 4-H Environmental Education Conference Center.

North Carolina's Tyrrell County is a place where nature's diversity converges. The Albemarle Sound estuary gently flows in rhythms that harmonize with the pristine shoreline of the Atlantic. On this place where the water meets the land, the two hundred and forty-two acre natural classroom will serve as an ideal site for the Eastern 4-H Environmental Education Conference Center.

Like the points of the quilt's stars, 4-H patiently helps each child reach the highest level of life skills. In Richard's painting, the quilter's stars flow down her lap in a radiant stream of fabric, just as the hopes and dreams of children progress toward fulfillment throughout their experiences in 4-H. The effects of patient, loving guidance in creating each happy, responsible 4-H'er extends beyond the child's club and community, reaching and enfolding even the fabric of his or her country and world.

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Commemorating The Eastern 4-H Environmental Conference Center

When I was invited by North Carolina 4-H Youth Development to paint an image that would reflect the essence of that organization's commitment to the holistic and meaningful development of young people, two things came to mind: My memories of raising one hundred chickens as a 4-H member when I was a small boy and the image of nurturing, creative hands working on a quilt.

"Perhaps you, like me, had a mother, grandmother, or special neighbor, who quilted. Often we remember our loved ones by the things they made. Quilts, for me, symbolize patience, kindness and loving attention. May "Hands of Service" hold for you eternal themes that make and sew the threads of peace, indeed wholeness.

"There is healing, too, in a quilt. In the steady hands that cut, place, hold and stitch, the old is made new. That which is used up is given new life. Here are symbols of transformation, of death and birth, and nurtured by caring creativity.

"What a metaphor a quilt is. To the core of our being it speaks. To the heart of our matter is its conversation Its language is of what we know.

"I imagine someone who had received abundant love arranged a pattern of diamonds to form the symmetrical star expressing the harmony and unity of the peace such unconditional love creates. Stitch by stitch, these diamonds are joined to form the balanced stars. This reminds me of the way both young and old can grow into wholeness, stage by stage, with the loving attention of committed hands of service."

Richard Tumbleston

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The North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill is a nationally recognized, 21-bed treatment, rehabilitation and research facility. Shown left to right are Dr. Michael Peck (surgeon and director of the Burn Center) demonstrating a shower chair specially designed for burn victims to Randy Brecheisen (chairman of the EMC Managers Golf Tournament and executive vice president of Piedmont EMC) and Ernest Grant (outreach nurse education clinician for the Burn Center).

Supporting the North Carolina Burn Center

The managers of North Carolina's electric cooperatives hosted a golf tournament in September that raised over $34,000 for the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center.

Thanks to the generosity of the cooperatives and the businesses who work with them, North Carolinians today have a greater opportunity to "learn not to burn." The "Learn Not to Burn" program directed by the North Carolina Jaycee Burn Center sends specialists to make presentations to schools, fire departments, senior citizens, Jaycees and other service groups. Many serious injuries and fatalities are prevented each year because children and adults learn not to burn.

Listed here are the major donors to the golf tournament. The cooperatives also are very grateful to the many other businesses and individuals who contributed to the success of the tournament.

Thanks for caring about North Carolina

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